

SITUATION REPORT NO. 1
INCIDENT NO. 2003-026
DATE: March 20, 2003 Time 5:00 p.m.

TO: Governor John Hoeven
State Capitol
Bismarck ND 58505

1. **NATURE OF DISASTER:** **Power Outages** – Southwestern North Dakota experienced power outages due to heavy ice storms on March 17-20.
2. **DEATHS AND INJURIES:** Officials in Bowman County are investigating whether icy conditions contributed to injuries sustained by a Southwest Water Authority employee who fell from a ladder into a pit, while checking water lines. The employee was transported by ambulance to a Bismarck hospital.

One person suffered from smoke inhalation when the occupant's home caught fire.

3. **DAMAGES:** Power outages occurred March 17–20 in Bowman, Slope, Adams, Hettinger and Stark Counties when freezing rain knocked down power lines and approximately 60 power poles. The outages are affecting approximately 300 customers within the five counties. Slope Electric Company officials relate that power may not be fully restored until Sunday, March 23, 2003. The company's crews are having a difficult time accessing some areas due to saturated soil conditions.

In Bowman County, southwest of the City of Bowman, a residence fire was caused by candles that the occupant had been using for lighting due to the power outage. The home was a total loss. Additional damages include downed trees in the cities of Bowman, Scranton, and Rhame.

In Slope County, it was reported that numerous power lines and poles had been knocked down; people without power were relying on portable generators.

Hettinger County officials reported heavy ice had downed 11 power poles in the northwestern portion of the county. Power has since been restored to all Slope Electric subscribers.

In Adams County, power outages occurred north of Reeder and in the city of Hettinger. Electric crews are working to restore power to these areas.

In Stark County, West Plains Electric reported damage to 20 power poles due to the heavy ice. This resulted in power outages for about 25 subscribers south and southeast of Dickinson in the Lefor area. Crews expected to restore power by noon March 20, 2003.

4. **RESOURCES:**

LOCAL: Local agencies responding to the emergency included law enforcement, fire departments, city and county administration offices, human services, public works departments, communications centers, emergency management offices and emergency medical services.

STATE: State Radio Communications and the North Dakota Division of Emergency Management monitored conditions.

FEDERAL: National Weather Service issued periodic weather updates.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: No volunteer activity has been reported.
6. MAJOR ACTIONS: Public works crews in areas affected by the heavy ice are involved with clean up efforts. Utility crews are repairing downed utility lines and assisting with replacing damaged poles.
7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No assistance has been requested.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: Crews from Slope Electric Company, West Plains Electric Company and Mor-Gran-Sioux Power Company are repairing downed and damaged power lines and replacing broken power poles.
9. OTHER INFORMATION: The N.D. Division of Emergency Management's Situation Reports are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is <http://www.state.nd.us/dem>.

Douglas C. Friez, State Director